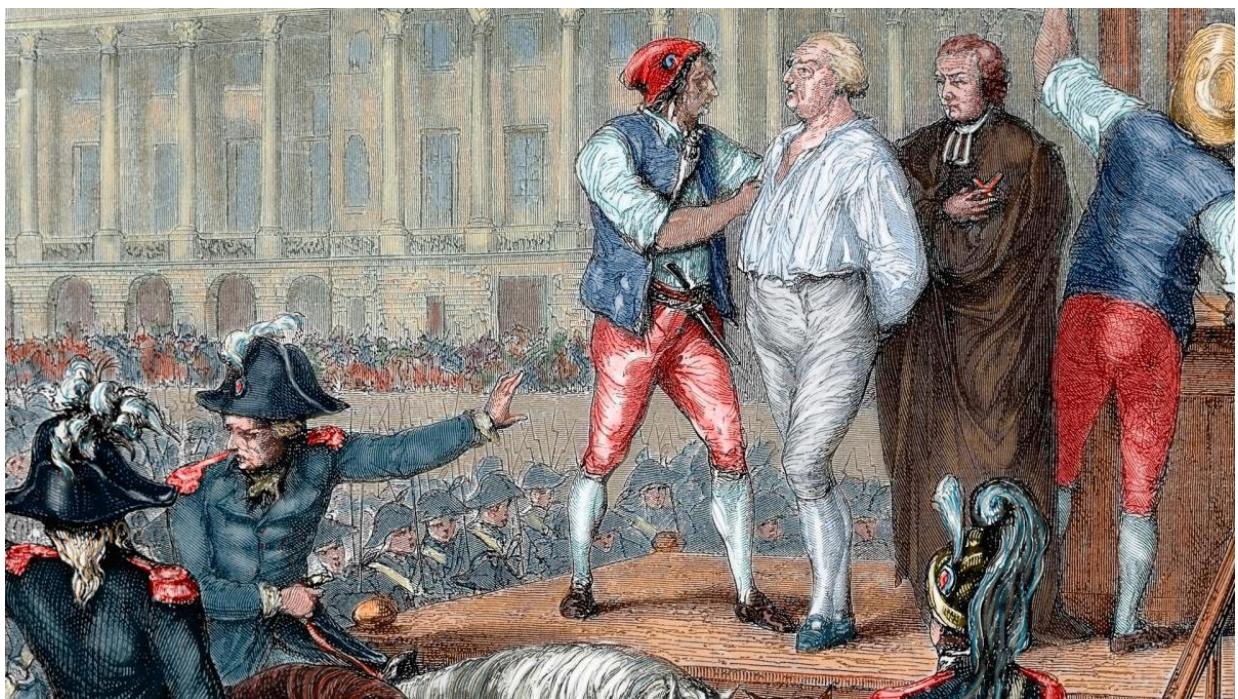


# The Bible and the French Revolution



Ellen White (1827–1915) through her famous book **THE GREAT CONTROVERSY** in the chapter 15 gives us a prophetic interpretation of dramatic history events related to the Apocalypse chapter 11.



King Louis XVI before the Guillotine on Place de la Révolution (1793).

# France and the Bible

The prophecy of Revelation 11

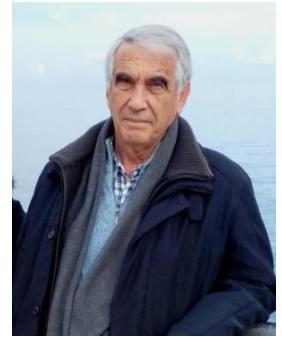
interpreted by Ellen G. White



Premise by P. Luisetti, text compiler

**T**he reading that will just follow after my premise is the report of the historical framework presented in chapter 15 of the book "The Great Controversy" written by Ellen G. White (1827-1915), entitled [The Bible and the French Revolution](#).

The chapter 15 is mainly related to late eighteenth-century in France. It is known that the French Revolution had as its objective the building of a new society, no longer under the shackles of religion and monarchy, but in virtue of liberal enlightenment thought. What caused the hate to the Protestants who appealed to the Bible? What were the political strategies put in place by the institutional powers of the time to convert them back to Catholicism? In the new society that claimed "Liberté-égalité-fraternité", the Bible was the book, the stumbling stone, which stopped its evolution, opening up new and dramatic scenarios.



In the prophecy of Apocalypse 11 the apostle John had predicted, with some suggestive images, what will happen in the future of christians in France, but the language is very symbolic and must be correctly codified. Those readers who don't have an advanced theological preparation should not be discouraged: everyone can discover by itself the exactness of the historical facts that have happened! This following report of Ellen White contains much scriptural material taken from excellent historical sources (cfr. page 25-27) of her time to provide the evidence of her statements. The author is highly persuasive in deciphering that part that corresponds to Revelation 11:2-12 with a certainly inspired tone that sets her apart.

In the chapter 32 of the same book, the author has full right to warn with these words those who especially make human speculations on Scripture:

«In order to sustain erroneous doctrines or unchristian practices, some will seize upon passages of Scripture separated from the context, perhaps quoting half of a single verse as proving their point, when the remaining portion would show the meaning to be quite the opposite. With the cunning of the serpent they entrench themselves behind disconnected utterances construed to suit their carnal desires. Thus, do many willfully pervert the word of God. Others, who have an active imagination, seize upon the figures and symbols of Holy Writ, interpret them to suit

their fancy, with little regard to the testimony of Scripture as its own interpreter, and then they present their vagaries as the teachings of the Bible.

Whenever the study of the Scriptures is entered upon without a prayerful, humble, teachable spirit, the plainest and simplest as well as the most difficult passages will be wrested from their true meaning. ...

And the discord and division which exist among the churches of Christendom are in a great measure due to the prevailing custom of wresting the Scriptures to support a favorite theory».

### End of the promise

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#### Reader's guide

The eleven blue-black subtitles with capital letters were added by me and are missing in the original English text. Example: TWO FAITHFUL AND HONESTY WITNESSES. They can be reached quickly and easily in the bookmarks of this study.

The inserts used by Ellen White from other historical sources, or external materials shown in the Appendix, «are highlighted with blue color». Take note that the download area for *The Great Controversy* is on page 23.

# The Bible and the French Revolution

By Ellen White

In the sixteenth century the Reformation, presenting an open Bible to the people, had sought admission to all the countries of Europe. Some nations welcomed it with gladness, as a messenger of Heaven. In other lands the papacy succeeded to a great extent in preventing its entrance; and the light of Bible knowledge, with its elevating influences, was almost wholly excluded.

In one country, though the light found entrance, it was not comprehended by the darkness. For centuries, truth and error struggled for the mastery. At last the evil triumphed, and the truth of Heaven was thrust out. «This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light». ([John 3:19](#))

The nation was left to reap the results of the course which she had chosen. The restraint of God's Spirit was removed from a people that had despised the gift of His grace. Evil was permitted to come to maturity. And all the world saw the fruit of willful rejection of the light. The war against the Bible, carried forward for so many centuries in France, culminated in the scenes of the Revolution. That terrible outbreaking was but the legitimate result of Rome's suppression of the Scriptures. ([Appendix 01](#)) It presented the most striking illustration which the world has ever witnessed of the working out of the papal policy — an illustration of the results to which for more than a thousand years the teaching of the Roman Church had been tending.

The suppression of the Scriptures during the period of papal supremacy was foretold by the prophets; and the Revelator points also to the terrible results that were to accrue especially to France from the domination of the “man of sin.” ([2 Thess. 2:3](#))

Said the angel of the Lord: **2** «... The holy city shall they tread underfoot forty and two months. **3** And I will give power unto My two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth... **7** And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. **8** And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.... **10** And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. **11** And after three days and a half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them». ([Revelation 11:2,3,7,8,10-11](#))

# 1260 YEARS OF PAPAL SUPREMACY JOINTS TO THE END

The periods here mentioned — “forty and two months” and “a thousand two hundred and threescore days” — are the same, alike representing the time in which the church of Christ was to suffer oppression from Rome. The 1260 years of papal supremacy began in A.D. 538, and would therefore terminate in 1798. At that time a French army entered Rome and made the pope a prisoner, and he died in exile. Though a new pope was soon afterward elected, the papal hierarchy has never since been able to wield the power which it before possessed.



Photo credit: Wikipedia.

After the death of Pope Pius VI (1717-1799) exiled in France, it seemed to be the end of the Catholic Church. He died in Valance-sur-Rhône the year after his capture.

The persecution of the church did not continue throughout the entire period of the 1260 years. God in mercy to His people cut short the time of their fiery trial. In foretelling the “great tribulation” to befall the church, the Saviour said: «Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened». (Matthew 24:22)

Through the influence of the Reformation the persecution was brought to an end prior to 1798.

## TWO FAITHFUL AND HONESTY WITNESSES

Concerning the two witnesses the prophet declares further: «These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth». Said the psalmist: «Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path». (Revelation 11:4; Psalm 119:105)



The two witnesses represent the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament. Both are important testimonies to the origin and perpetuity of the law of God. Both are witnesses also to the plan of salvation. The types, sacrifices, and prophecies of the Old Testament point forward to a Saviour to come. The Gospels and Epistles of the New Testament tell of a Saviour who has come in the exact manner foretold by type and prophecy.

«They shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and three-score days, clothed in sackcloth». During the greater part of this period, God's witnesses remained in a state of obscurity. The papal power sought to hide from the people the word of truth and set before them false witnesses to contradict its testimony. ([Appendix 02](#)) When the Bible was proscribed by religious and secular authority; when its testimony was perverted, and every effort made that men and demons could invent to turn the minds of the people from it; when those who dared proclaim its sacred truths were hunted, betrayed, tortured, buried in dungeon cells, martyred for their faith, or compelled to flee to mountain fastnesses, and to dens and caves of the earth — then the faithful witnesses prophesied in sackcloth. Yet they continued their testimony throughout the entire period of 1260 years. In the darkest times there were faithful men who loved God's word and were jealous for His honor. To these loyal servants were given wisdom, power, and authority to declare His truth during the whole of this time.

«And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed». ([Revelation 11:5](#)) Men cannot with impunity trample upon the word of God. The meaning of this fearful denunciation is set forth in the closing chapter of the Revelation: «I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book». ([Revelation 22:18,19](#))



Photo credit: J. Maniscalco by Adventist Media/De

Such are the warnings which God has given to guard men against changing in any manner that which He has revealed or commanded. These solemn denunciations apply to all who by their influence lead men

to regard lightly the law of God. They should cause those to fear and tremble who flippantly declare it a matter of little consequence whether we obey God's law or not. All who exalt their own opinions above divine revelation, all who would change the plain meaning of Scripture to suit their own convenience, or for the sake of conforming to the world, are taking upon themselves a fearful responsibility. The written word, the law of God, will measure the character of every man and condemn all whom this unerring test shall declare wanting.

## THE BEAST THAT RISES FROM ABYSS

«When they shall have finished [are finishing] their testimony». ([Revelation 11:7](#)) The period when the two witnesses were to prophesy clothed in sackcloth, ended in 1798. As they were approaching the termination of their work in obscurity, war was to be made upon them by the power represented as «the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit».

In many of the nations of Europe the powers that ruled in church and state had for centuries been controlled by Satan through the medium of the papacy. But here is brought to view a new manifestation of satanic power. It had been Rome's policy, under a profession of reverence for the Bible, to keep it locked up in an unknown tongue and hidden away from the people. Under her rule the witnesses prophesied "clothed in sackcloth." But another power — the beast from the bottomless pit — was to arise to make open, avowed war upon the word of God.

«The great city» ([Vers. 8](#)), in whose streets the witnesses are slain, and where their dead bodies lie, is "spiritually" Egypt. Of all nations presented in Bible history, Egypt most boldly denied the existence of the living God and resisted His commands. No monarch ever ventured upon more open and highhanded rebellion against the authority of Heaven than did the king of Egypt. When the message was brought him by Moses, in the name of the Lord, Pharaoh proudly answered: «Who is Jehovah, that I should hearken unto His voice to let Israel go? I know not Jehovah, and moreover I will not let Israel go». ([Exodus 5:2](#), A.R.V) This is atheism, and the nation represented by Egypt would give voice to a similar denial of the claims of the living God and would manifest a like spirit of unbelief and defiance.

«The great city» is also compared, "spiritually," to Sodom. The corruption of Sodom in breaking the law of God was especially manifested in licentiousness. And this sin was also to be a pre-eminent characteristic of the nation that should fulfill the specifications of this scripture.

According to the words of the prophet, then, a little before the year 1798 some power of satanic origin and character would rise to make war upon the Bible. And in the land where the testimony of God's two witnesses should thus be silenced, there would be manifest the atheism of the Pharaoh and the licentiousness of Sodom.

This prophecy has received a most exact and striking fulfillment in the history of France. During the Revolution, in 1793, "the world for the first time heard an assembly of men, born and educated in civilization, and assuming the right to govern one of the finest of the European nations, uplift their united voice to deny the most solemn truth which man's soul receives, and renounce unanimously the

belief and worship of a Deity.” (Appendix 03) “France is the only nation in the world concerning which the authentic record survives, that as a nation she lifted her hand in open rebellion against the Author of the universe. Plenty of blasphemers, plenty of infidels, there have been, and still continue to be, in England, Germany, Spain, and elsewhere; but France stands apart in the world’s history as the single state which, by the decree of her Legislative Assembly, pronounced that there was no God, and of which the entire population of the capital, and a vast majority elsewhere, women as well as men, danced and sang with joy in accepting the announcement.” (Appendix 04)

France presented also the characteristics which especially distinguished Sodom. During the Revolution there was manifest a state of moral debasement and corruption similar to that which brought destruction upon the cities of the plain. And the historian presents together the atheism and the licentiousness of France, as given in the prophecy: “Intimately connected with these laws affecting religion, was that which reduced the union of marriage — the most sacred engagement which human beings can form, and the permanence of which leads most strongly to the consolidation of society — to the state of a mere civil contract of a transitory character, which any two persons might engage in and cast loose at pleasure.... If

fends had set themselves to work to discover a mode of most effectually destroying whatever is venerable, graceful, or permanent in domestic life, and of obtaining at the same time an assurance that the mischief which it was their object to create should be perpetuated from one generation to another, they could not have invented a more effectual plan than the degradation of marriage. ... Sophie Arnould, an actress famous for the witty things she said, described the republican marriage as ‘the sacrament of adultery.’” (Appendix 05)

Photo credit: Wikipedia. Sophie Arnould (1740-1802).

## CENTURIES OF PERSECUTION AGAINST CHRISTIANS IN FRANCE

«Where also our Lord was crucified». (<sup>Vers. 8</sup>) This specification of the prophecy was also fulfilled by France. In no land had the spirit of enmity against Christ been more strikingly displayed. In no country had the truth encountered more bitter and cruel opposition. In the persecution which France had visited upon the confessors of the gospel, she had crucified Christ in the person of His disciples.

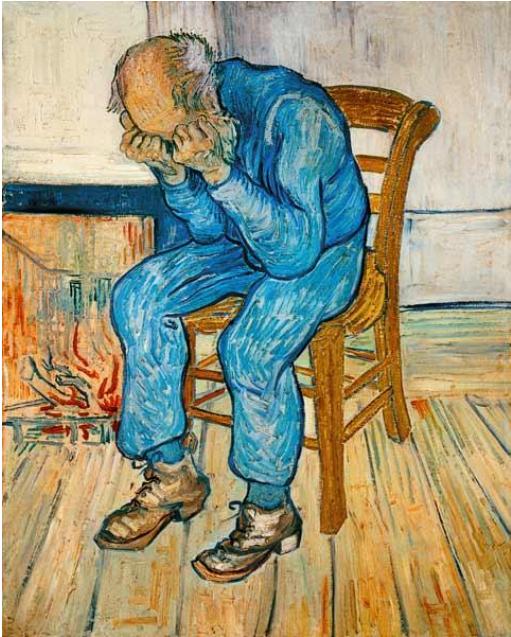


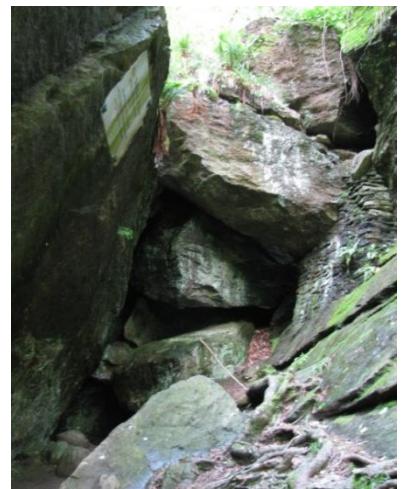
Photo credit, PD: Van Gogh. At Eternity's Gate.

Century after century the blood of the saints had been shed. While the Waldenses laid down their lives upon the mountains of Piedmont «or the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ», similar witness to the truth had been borne by their brethren, the Albigenses of France. In the days of the Reformation its disciples had been put to death with horrible tortures. King and nobles, highborn women and delicate maidens, the pride and chivalry of the nation, had feasted their eyes upon the agonies of the martyrs of Jesus. The brave

Huguenots, battling for those rights which the human heart holds most sacred, had poured out their blood on many a hard-fought field. The Protestants were counted as outlaws, a price was set upon their heads, and they were hunted down like wild beasts.

The small entrance to the Waldensian Cave church (Piedmont, North Italy).

The «Church in the Desert», the few descendants of the ancient Christians that still lingered in France in the eighteenth century, hiding away in the mountains of the south, still cherished the faith of their fathers. As they ventured to meet by night on mountainside or lonely moor, they were chased by dragoons and dragged away to lifelong slavery in the galleys. The purest, the most refined, and the most intelligent of the French were chained, in horrible torture, amidst robbers and assassins. ([Appendix 06](#)) Others, more mercifully dealt with, were shot down in cold blood, as, unarmed and helpless, they fell upon their knees in prayer.



Hundreds of aged men, defenseless women, and innocent children were left dead upon the earth at their place of meeting. In traversing the mountainside or the forest, where they had been accustomed to assemble, it was not unusual to find “at every four paces, dead bodies dotting the sward, and corpses hanging suspended from the trees.” Their country, laid waste with the sword, the ax, the fagot, “was converted into one vast, gloomy wilderness.” “These atrocities were enacted ... in no dark age, but in the brilliant era of Louis XIV. Science was then cultivated, letters flourished, the divines of the court and of the capital were learned and eloquent men, and greatly affected the graces of meekness and charity.” ([Appendix 07](#))

But blackest in the black catalogue of crime, most horrible among the fiendish deeds of all the dreadful centuries, was the St. Bartholomew Massacre (1572). The world still recalls with shuddering horror the scenes of that most cowardly and cruel onslaught. The king of France, urged on by Romish priests and prelates, lent his sanction to the dreadful work. A bell, tolling at dead of night, was a signal for the slaughter. Protestants by thousands, sleeping quietly in their homes, trusting to the plighted honor of their king, were dragged forth without a warning and murdered in cold blood.

Photo credit, PD. It represents the St. Bartholomew's massacre in the night of 1572.

Paint of Édouard Debat-Ponsan (1847-1913).



As Christ was the invisible leader of His people from Egyptian bondage, so was Satan the unseen leader of his subjects in this horrible work of multiplying martyrs. For seven days the massacre was continued in Paris, the first three with inconceivable

fury. And it was not confined to the city itself, but by special order of the king was extended to all the provinces and towns where Protestants were found. Neither age nor sex was respected. Neither the innocent babe nor the man of gray hairs was spared. Noble and peasant, old and young, mother and child, were cut down together. Throughout France the butchery continued for two months. Seventy thousand of the very flower of the nation perished.



Photo credit: Biografieonline/Pope Gregor XIII (1502-1585).

"When the news of the massacre reached Rome, the exultation among the clergy knew no bounds. The cardinal of Lorraine rewarded the messenger with a thousand crowns; the cannon of St. Angelo thundered forth a joyous salute; and bells rang out from every steeple; bonfires turned night into day; and Gregory XIII, attended by the cardinals and other ecclesiastical dignitaries, went in long procession to the church of St.

Louis, where the cardinal of Lorraine chanted a *Te Deum* ... A medal was struck to commemorate the massacre, and in the Vatican may still be seen three frescoes of Vasari, describing the attack upon the admiral, the king in council plotting the

massacre, and the massacre itself. Gregory sent Charles the Golden Rose; and four months after the massacre, ... he listened complacently to the sermon of a French priest, ... who spoke of 'that day so full of happiness and joy, when the most holy father received the news, and went in solemn state to render thanks to God and St. Louis.' (1) (Appendix 8)

## THE BLASPHEMY AGAINST CHRIST

The same master spirit that urged on the St. Bartholomew Massacre led also in the scenes of the Revolution. Jesus Christ was declared to be an impostor, and the rallying cry of the French infidels was, "Crush the Wretch," meaning Christ. Heaven-daring blasphemy and abominable wickedness went hand in hand, and the basest of men, the most abandoned monsters of cruelty and vice, were most highly exalted. In all this, supreme homage was paid to Satan; while Christ, in His characteristics of truth, purity, and unselfish love, was crucified. «The beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them».

The atheistical power that ruled in France during the Revolution and the Reign of Terror, did wage such a war against God and His holy word as the world had never witnessed. The worship of the Deity was abolished by the National Assembly. Bibles were collected and publicly burned with every possible manifestation of scorn. The law of God was trampled underfoot. The institutions of the Bible were abolished. The weekly rest day was set aside, and in its stead every tenth day was devoted to reveling and blasphemy. Baptism and the Communion were prohibited. And announcements posted conspicuously over the burial places declared death to be an eternal sleep.

The fear of God was said to be so far from the beginning of wisdom that it was the beginning of folly. All religious worship was prohibited, except that of liberty and the country. The "constitutional bishop of Paris was brought forward to play the principal part in the most impudent and scandalous farce ever acted in the face of a national representation. ... He was brought forward in full procession, to declare to the Convention that the religion which he had taught so many years was, in every respect, a piece of priestcraft, which had no foundation either in history or sacred truth. He disowned, in solemn and explicit terms, the existence of the Deity to whose worship he had been consecrated and devoted himself in future to the homage of liberty, equality, virtue, and morality. He then laid on the table his

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(1) Compiler's note: The French King Louis IX was the saint of the said church of Saint Louis. In the 13th century he had rendered outstanding service in building up the Inquisition.

episcopal decorations and received a fraternal embrace from the president of the Convention. Several apostate priests followed the example of this prelate." (Appendix 09)

«And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth». ([Revelation 11:10](#)) Infidel France had silenced the reproving voice of God's two witnesses. The word of truth lay dead in her streets, and those who hated the restrictions and requirements of God's law were jubilant. Men publicly defied the King of heaven. Like the sinners of old, they cried: «How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the Most High?» ([Psalm 73:11](#))



With blasphemous boldness almost beyond belief, one of the priests of the new order said: "God, if You exist, avenge Your injured name. I bid You defiance! You remain silent; You dare not launch Your thunders. Who after this will believe in Your existence?" (Appendix 10) What an echo is this of the Pharaoh's demand: «Who is Jehovah, that I should obey His voice?» «I know not Jehovah!»

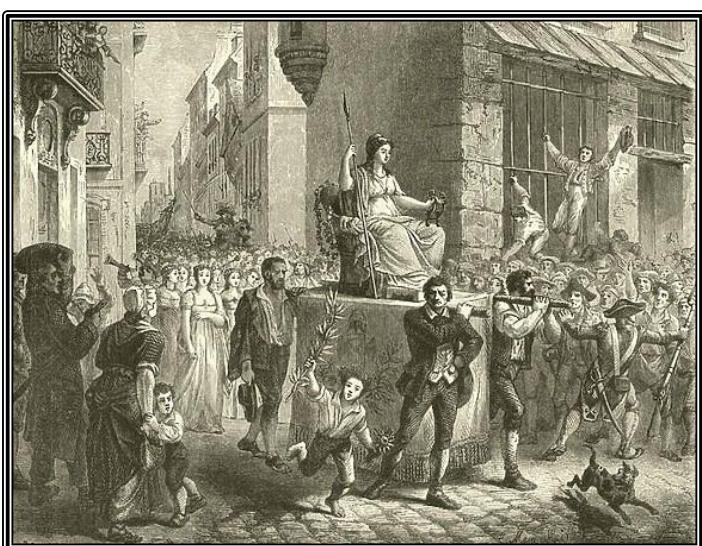
Photo credit: Wikipedia. Portrait of Voltaire (1694-1778).

## THE GODDESS OF REASON

The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God» ([Psalm 14:1](#)) And the Lord declares concerning the perverters of the truth: «Their folly shall be manifest unto all.» ([2 Timothy 3:9](#)) After France had renounced the worship of the living God, «the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity», it was only a little time till she descended to degrading idolatry, by the worship of the Goddess of Reason, in the person of a profligate woman. And this in the representative assembly of the nation, and by its

highest civil and legislative authorities! Says the historian:

"One of the ceremonies of this insane time stands unrivaled for absurdity combined with impiety. The doors of the Convention were thrown open to a band of musicians, preceded by whom, the members of the municipal body entered in solemn procession, singing a hymn in praise of liberty, and escorting, as the object of their future



worship, a veiled female, whom they termed the Goddess of Reason. Being brought within the bar, she was unveiled with great form, and placed on the right of the president, when she was generally recognized as a dancing girl of the opera. ... To this person, as the fittest representative of that reason whom they worshiped, the National Convention of France rendered public homage. This impious and ridiculous mummery had a certain fashion; and the installation of the Goddess of Reason was renewed and imitated throughout the nation, in such places where the inhabitants desired to show themselves equal to all the heights of the Revolution." (Appendix 11)



Photo credit, Wikipedia: Pierre Gaspard Chaumette (1763-1794). He was also guillotined.

Said the orator [Chaumette] who introduced the worship of Reason: "Legislators! Fanaticism has given way to reason. Its bleared eyes could not endure the brilliancy of the light. This day an immense concourse has assembled beneath those gothic vaults, which, for the first time, re-echoed the truth. There the French have celebrated the only true worship, — that of Liberty, that of Reason. There we have formed wishes for the prosperity of the arms of the Republic. There we have abandoned inanimate idols for Reason, for that animated image, the masterpiece of nature." (Appendix 12)

"When the goddess was brought into the Convention, the orator took her by the hand, and turning to the assembly said: "Mortals, cease to tremble before the powerless thunders of a God whom your fears have created. Henceforth acknowledge no divinity but Reason. I offer you its noblest and purest image; if you must have idols, sacrifice only to such as this.... Fall before the august Senate of Freedom, oh! Veil of Reason!"

"The goddess, after being embraced by the president, was mounted on a magnificent car, and conducted, amid an immense crowd, to the cathedral of Notre Dame, to take the place of the Deity. There she was elevated on the high altar and received the adoration of all present." (Appendix 13)

"This was followed, not long afterward, by the public burning of the Bible. On one occasion "the Popular Society of the Museum" entered the hall of the municipality, exclaiming, "Vive la Raison!" and carrying on the top of a pole the half-burned remains of several books, among others breviaries, missals, and the Old and New Testaments, which "expiated in a great fire," said the president, "all the fooleries which they have made the human race commit." (Appendix 14)



Photo credit: Pravlife.org/On November 10, 1793, the Notre Dame Cathedral welcomed the Freedom Party, which culminated in the cult of the goddess of reason, where churches were transformed into temples of reason. Nineteenth-century painting.

## ATHEISM AND CATHOLICISM

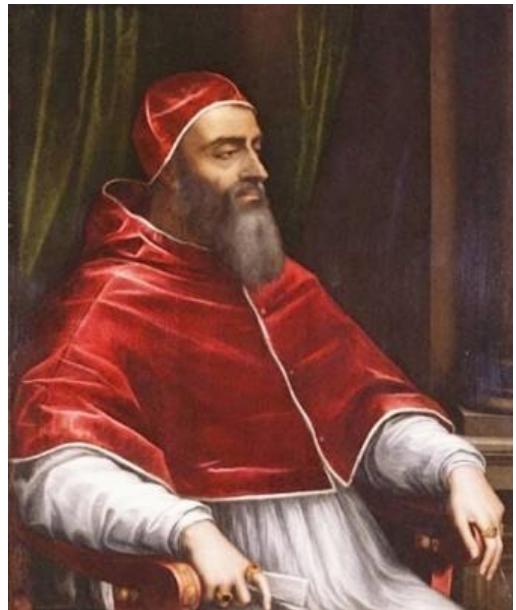
It was popery that had begun the work which atheism was completing. The policy of

Rome had wrought out those conditions, social, political, and religious, that were hurrying France on to ruin. (Appendix 15) Writers, in referring to the horrors of the Revolution, say that these excesses are to be charged upon the throne and the church. In strict justice they are to be charged upon the church. Popery had poisoned the minds of kings against the Reformation, as an enemy to the crown, an element of discord that would be fatal to the peace and harmony of the nation. It was the genius of Rome that by this means inspired the direst cruelty and the most galling oppression which proceeded from the throne.

Photo credit: PD. \* The Pope is Clemente VII (1478-1534).

"The spirit of liberty went with the Bible. Wherever the gospel was received, the minds of the people were awakened. They began to cast off the shackles that had held them bondslaves of ignorance, vice, and superstition. They began to think and act as men. Monarchs saw it and trembled for their despotism."

Rome was not slow to inflame their jealous fears. Said the pope\* to the regent of France in 1525: "This mania [Protestantism] will not only confound and destroy religion, but all principalities, nobility, laws, orders, and ranks besides". (Appendix 16) A few years later a papal nuncio warned the king: "Sire, be not deceived. The Protestants will upset all civil as well as religious order.... The throne is in as much danger as the altar.... The introduction of a new religion must necessarily introduce a new government." (Appendix 17)



And theologians appealed to the prejudices of the people by declaring that the Protestant doctrine “entices men away to novelties and folly; it robs the king of the devoted affection of his subjects and devastates both church and state.” Thus, Rome succeeded in arraying France against the Reformation. “It was to uphold the throne, preserve the nobles, and maintain the laws, that the sword of persecution was first unsheathed in France.” (Appendix 18)

Little did the rulers of the land foresee the results of that fateful policy. The teaching of the Bible would have implanted in the minds and hearts of the people those principles of justice, temperance, truth, equity, and benevolence which are the very cornerstone of a nation’s prosperity. «Righteousness exalteth a nation». Thereby «the throne is established». ([Proverbs 14:34; 16:12](#)). «The work of righteousness shall be peace», and the effect, «quietness and assurance forever». ([Isaiah 32:17](#)) He who obeys the divine law will most truly respect and obey the laws of his country. He who fears God will honor the king in the exercise of all just and legitimate authority. But unhappy France prohibited the Bible and banned its disciples. Century after century, men of principle and integrity, men of intellectual acuteness and moral strength, who had the courage to avow their convictions and the faith to suffer for the truth — for centuries these men toiled as slaves in the galleys, perished at the stake, or rotted in dungeon cells. Thousands upon thousands found safety in flight; and this continued for two hundred and fifty years after the opening of the Reformation.

“Scarcely was there a generation of Frenchmen during the long period that did not witness the disciples of the gospel fleeing before the insane fury of the persecutor, and carrying with them the intelligence, the arts, the industry, the order, in which, as a rule, they pre-eminently excelled, to enrich the lands in which they found an asylum. And in proportion as they replenished other countries with these good gifts, did they empty their own of them.

If all that was now driven away had been retained in France; if, during these three hundred years, the industrial skill of the exiles had been cultivating her soil; if, during these three hundred years, their artistic bent had been improving her manufactures; if, during these three hundred years, their creative genius and analytic power had been enriching her literature and cultivating her science; if their wisdom had been guiding her councils, their bravery fighting her battles, their equity framing her laws, and the religion of the Bible strengthening the intellect and governing the conscience of her people, what a glory would at this day have encompassed France! What a great, prosperous, and happy country — a pattern to the nations — would she have been!

"But a blind and inexorable bigotry chased from her soil every teacher of virtue, every champion of order, every honest defender of the throne; it said to the men who would have made their country a 'renown and glory' in the earth, choose which you will have, a stake or exile." And the Revolution, with all its horrors, was the dire result.

"With the flight of the Huguenots a general decline settled upon France. Flourishing manufacturing cities fell into decay; fertile districts returned to their native wildness; intellectual dullness and moral declension succeeded a period of unwonted progress. Paris became one vast almshouse, and it is estimated that, at the breaking out of the Revolution, two hundred thousand paupers claimed charity from the hands of the king. The Jesuits alone flourished in the decaying nation, and ruled with dreadful tyranny over churches and schools, the prisons and the galleys." (Appendix 19)

The gospel would have brought to France the solution of those political and social problems that baffled the skill of her clergy, her king, and her legislators, and finally plunged the nation into anarchy and ruin. But under the domination of Rome the people had lost the Saviour's blessed lessons of self-sacrifice and unselfish love. They had been led away from the practice of self-denial for the good of others. The rich had found no rebuke for their oppression of the poor, the poor no help for their servitude and degradation. The selfishness of the wealthy and powerful grew more and more apparent and oppressive. For centuries the greed and profligacy of the noble resulted in grinding extortion toward the peasant. The rich wronged the poor, and the poor hated the rich.

## THE FINANCIAL SITUATION PRIOR THE REVOLUTION

In many provinces the estates were held by the nobles, and the laboring classes were only tenants; they were at the mercy of their landlords and were forced to submit to their exorbitant demands. The burden of supporting both the church and the state fell upon the middle and lower classes, who were heavily taxed by the civil authorities and by the clergy. "The pleasure of the nobles was considered the supreme law; the farmers and the peasants might starve, for aught their oppressors cared... The people were compelled at every turn to consult the exclusive interest of the landlord. The lives of the agricultural laborers were lives of incessant work and unrelieved misery; their complaints, if they ever dared to complain, were treated with insolent contempt. The courts of justice would always listen to a noble as against a peasant; bribes were notoriously accepted by the judges; and the merest caprice of the aristocracy had the force of law, by virtue of

this system of universal corruption. Of the taxes wrung from the commonalty by the secular magnates on the one hand, and the clergy on the other, not half ever found its way into the royal or episcopal treasury; the rest was squandered in profligate self-indulgence. And the men who thus impoverished their fellow subjects were themselves exempt from taxation and entitled by law or custom to all the appointments of the state. The privileged classes numbered a hundred and fifty thousand, and for their gratification millions were condemned to hopeless and degrading lives." (Appendix 20)

The court was given up to luxury and profligacy. There was little confidence existing between the people and the rulers. Suspicion fastened upon all the measures of the government as designing and selfish. For more than half a century before the time of the Revolution the throne was occupied by Louis XV, who, even in those evil times, was distinguished as an indolent, frivolous, and sensual monarch.



Photo credit: Baroque.it  
King Louis XV of France and Navarra (1710-1774).

With a depraved and cruel aristocracy and an impoverished and ignorant lower class, the state financially embarrassed and the people exasperated, it needed no prophet's eye to foresee a terrible impending outbreak. To the warnings of his counselors the king was accustomed to reply: "Try to make things go on as long as I am likely to live; after my death it may be as it will." It

was in vain that the necessity of reform was urged. He saw the evils but had neither the courage nor the power to meet them. The doom awaiting France was but too truly pictured in his indolent and selfish answer, "After me, the deluge!"

By working upon the jealousy of the kings and the ruling classes, Rome had influenced them to keep the people in bondage, well knowing that the state would thus be weakened, and purposing by this means to fasten both rulers and people in her thrall. With farsighted policy she perceived that in order to enslave men effectually, the shackles must be bound upon their souls; that the surest way to prevent them from escaping their bondage was to render them incapable of freedom. A thousandfold more terrible than the physical suffering which resulted from her policy, was the moral degradation. Deprived of the Bible, and abandoned to the teachings of bigotry and selfishness, the people were shrouded in ignorance and superstition, and sunken in vice, so that they were wholly unfitted for self-government.

But the outworking of all this was widely different from what Rome had purposed. Instead of holding the masses in a blind submission to her dogmas, her work resulted in making them infidels and revolutionists. Romanism they despised as priestcraft. They beheld the clergy as a party to their oppression. The only god they knew was the god of Rome; her teaching was their only religion. They regarded her greed and cruelty as the legitimate fruit of the Bible, and they would have none of it.

Rome had misrepresented the character of God and perverted His requirements, and now men rejected both the Bible and its Author. She had required a blind faith in her dogmas, under the pretended sanction of the Scriptures. In the reaction, Voltaire and his associates cast aside God's word altogether and spread everywhere the poison of infidelity. Rome had ground down the people under her iron heel; and now the masses, degraded and brutalized, in their recoil from her tyranny, cast off all restraint. Enraged at the glittering cheat to which they had so long paid homage, they rejected truth and falsehood together; and mistaking license for liberty, the slaves of vice exulted in their imagined freedom.

## THE REVOLUTION STARTS

At the opening of the Revolution, by a concession of the king, the people were granted a representation exceeding that of the nobles and the clergy combined. Thus, the balance of power was in their hands; but they were not prepared to use it with wisdom and moderation. Eager to redress the wrongs they had suffered, they determined to undertake the reconstruction of society. An outraged populace, whose minds were filled with bitter and long-treasured memories of wrong, resolved to revolutionize the state of misery that had grown unbearable and to avenge themselves upon those whom they regarded as the authors of their sufferings. The oppressed wrought out the lesson they had learned under tyranny and became the oppressors of those who had oppressed them.

Unhappy France reaped in blood the harvest she had sown. Terrible were the results of her submission to the controlling power of Rome. Where France, under the influence of Romanism, had set up the first stake at the opening of the Reformation, there the Revolution set up its first guillotine. On the very spot where the first martyrs to the Protestant faith were burned in the sixteenth century, the first victims were guillotined in the eighteenth. In repelling the gospel, which would have brought her healing, France had opened the door to infidelity and ruin. When the restraints of God's law were cast aside, it was found that the laws of man were inadequate to hold in check the powerful tides of human passion; and the nation

swept on to revolt and anarchy. The war against the Bible inaugurated an era which stands in the world's history as the Reign of Terror. Peace and happiness were banished from the homes and hearts of men. No one was secure. He who triumphed today was suspected, condemned, tomorrow. Violence and lust held undisputed sway.

On July 17, 1794, after appearing before the Court for their condemnation of rebellion, sedition, oppression to the French people, 14 Carmelite nuns of Compiègne + 2 lay collaborators were carried on two wagons towards the guillotine to face death by decapitation.



King, clergy, and nobles were compelled to submit to the atrocities of an excited and maddened people. Their thirst for vengeance was only stimulated by the execution of the king; and those who had decreed his death soon followed him to the scaffold. A general slaughter of all suspected of hostility to the Revolution was determined. The prisons were crowded, at one time containing more than two hundred thousand captives. The cities of the kingdom were filled with scenes of horror. One party of revolutionists was against another party, and France became a vast field for contending masses, swayed by the fury of their passions. **"In Paris one tumult succeeded another, and the citizens were divided into a medley of factions, that seemed intent on nothing but mutual extermination."**

And to add to the general misery, the nation became involved in a prolonged and devastating war with the great powers of Europe. **"The country was nearly bankrupt, the armies were clamoring for arrears of pay, the Parisians were starving, the provinces were laid waste by brigands, and civilization was almost extinguished in anarchy and license."**

All too well the people had learned the lessons of cruelty and torture which Rome had so diligently taught. A day of retribution at last had come. It was not now the disciples of Jesus that were thrust into dungeons and dragged to the stake. Long ago these had perished or been driven into exile. Unsparing Rome now felt the deadly power of those whom she had trained to delight in deeds of blood.

**"The example of persecution which the clergy of France had exhibited for so many ages, was now retorted upon them with signal vigor. The scaffolds ran red with the blood of the priests. The galleys and the prisons, once crowded with Huguenots, were now filled with their persecutors. Chained to the bench and toiling**

at the oar, the Roman Catholic clergy experienced all those woes which their church had so freely inflicted on the gentle heretics." (Appendix 21)

"Then came those days when the most barbarous of all codes was administered by the most barbarous of all tribunals; when no man could greet his neighbors or say his prayers ... without danger of committing a capital crime; when spies lurked in every corner; when the guillotine was long and hard at work every morning; when the jails were filled as close as the holds of a slave ship; when the gutters ran foaming with blood into the Seine. ... While the daily wagonloads of victims were carried the streets of Paris, the proconsuls, whom the sovereign committee had sent forth to the departments, reveled in an extravagance of cruelty unknown even in the capital. The knife of the deadly machine rose and fell too slow for their work of slaughter. Long rows of captives were mowed down with grapeshot. Holes were made in the bottom of crowded barges. Lyons was turned into a desert. At Arras even the cruel mercy of a speedy death was denied to the prisoners. All down the Loire, from Saumur to the sea, great flocks of crows and kites feasted on naked corpses, twined together in hideous embraces. No mercy was shown to sex or age. The number of young lads and of girls of seventeen who were murdered by that execrable government, is to be reckoned by hundreds. Babies torn from the breast were tossed from pike to pike along the Jacobin ranks." (Appendix 22) In the short space of ten years, multitudes of human beings perished.

## THE SATANIC PLAN

All this was as Satan would have it. This was what for ages he had been working to secure. His policy is deception from first to last, and his steadfast purpose is to bring woe and wretchedness upon men, to deface and defile the workmanship of God, to mar the divine purposes of benevolence and love, and thus cause grief in heaven. Then by his deceptive arts he blinds the minds of men and leads them to throw back the blame of his work upon God, as if all this misery were the result of the Creator's plan. In like manner, when those who have been degraded and brutalized through his cruel power achieve their freedom, he urges them on to excesses and atrocities. Then this picture of unbridled license is pointed out by tyrants and oppressors as an illustration of the results of liberty.

When error in one garb has been detected, Satan only masks it in a different disguise, and multitudes receive it as eagerly as at the first. When the people found Romanism to be a deception, and he could not through this agency lead them to transgression of God's law, he urged them to regard all religion as a cheat, and the

Bible as a fable; and, casting aside the divine statutes, they gave themselves up to unbridled iniquity.

The fatal error which wrought such woe for the inhabitants of France was the ignoring of this one great truth: that true freedom lies within the proscriptions of the law of God. «O that thou hadst hearkened to My commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea». ([Isaiah 48:18,22](#)) «There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked». «But whoso hearkeneth unto Me shall dwell safely and shall be quiet from fear of evil». ([Proverbs 1:33](#)) Atheists, infidels, and apostates oppose and denounce God's law; but the results of their influence prove that the well-being of man is bound up with his obedience of the divine statutes. Those who will not read the lesson from the book of God are bidden to read it in the history of nations.

When Satan wrought through the Roman Church to lead men away from obedience, his agency was concealed, and his work was so disguised that the degradation and misery which resulted were not seen to be the fruit of transgression. And his power was so far counteracted by the working of the Spirit of God that his purposes were prevented from reaching their full fruition. The people did not trace the effect to its cause and discover the source of their miseries. But in the Revolution the law of God was openly set aside by the National Council. And in the Reign of Terror which followed, the working of cause and effect could be seen by all.

When France publicly rejected God and set aside the Bible, wicked men and spirits of darkness exulted in their attainment of the object so long desired — a kingdom free from the restraints of the law of God. Because sentence against an evil work was not speedily executed, therefore the heart of the sons of men was «fully set in them to do evil». ([Ecclesiastes 8:11](#))

But the transgression of a just and righteous law must inevitably result in misery and ruin. Though not visited at once with judgments, the wickedness of men was nevertheless surely working out their doom. Centuries of apostasy and crime had been treasuring up wrath against the day of retribution; and when their iniquity was full, the despisers of God learned too late that it is a fearful thing to have worn out the divine patience.

The restraining Spirit of God, which imposes a check upon the cruel power of Satan, was in a great measure removed, and he whose only delight is the wretchedness of men was permitted to work his will. Those who had chosen the service of rebellion were left to reap its fruits until the land was filled with crimes too horrible for pen to trace. From devastated provinces and ruined cities, a terrible cry was heard — a cry of bitterest anguish. France was shaken as if by an

earthquake. Religion, law, social order, the family, the state, and the church — all were smitten down by the impious hand that had been lifted against the law of God. Truly spoke the wise man: "The wicked shall fall by his own wickedness." «Though a sinner do evil a hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before Him: but it shall not be well with the wicked». ([Proverbs 11:5; Ecclesiastes 8:12,13](#)) «They hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the Lord;» therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way and be filled with their own devices». ([Proverbs 1:29,31](#))

God's faithful witnesses, slain by the blasphemous power that «ascendeth out of the bottomless pit», were not long to remain silent. «After three days and a half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them». ([Revelation 11:11](#))

## THE BIBLE AWAKENS TO NEW LIFE

It was in 1793 that the decrees which abolished the Christian religion and set aside the Bible passed the French Assembly. Three years and a half later a resolution rescinding these decrees, thus granting toleration to the Scriptures, was adopted by the same body. The world stood aghast at the enormity of guilt which had resulted from a rejection of the Sacred Oracles, and men recognized the necessity of faith in God and His word as the foundation of virtue and morality. Saith the Lord: «Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? Even against the Holy One of Israel» ([Isaiah 37:23](#)) «Therefore, behold, I will cause them to know, this once will I cause them to know My hand and My might; and they shall know that My name is Jehovah». ([Jeremiah 16:21, A.R.V.](#))

Concerning the two witnesses the prophet declares further: «And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them». ([Revelation 11:12](#)) Since France made war upon God's two witnesses, they have been honored as never before. In 1804 the British and Foreign Bible Society was organized. This was followed by similar organizations, with numerous branches, upon the continent of Europe. In 1816 the American Bible Society was founded. When the British Society was formed, the Bible had been printed and circulated in fifty tongues. It has since been translated into many hundreds of languages and dialects. ([Appendix 23](#))

For the fifty years preceding 1792, little attention was given to the work of foreign missions. No new societies were formed, and there were but few churches that made any effort for the spread of Christianity in heathen lands. But toward the

close of the eighteenth century a great change took place. Men became dissatisfied with the results of rationalism and realized the necessity of divine revelation and experimental religion. From this time the work of foreign missions attained an unprecedented growth. ([Appendix 24](#))

The improvements in printing have given an impetus to the work of circulating the Bible. The increased facilities for communication between different countries, the breaking down of ancient barriers of prejudice and national exclusiveness, and the loss of secular power by the pontiff of Rome have opened the way for the entrance of the word of God. For some years the Bible has been sold without restraint in the streets of Rome, and it has now been carried to every part of the habitable globe.

Photo credit: Wikipedia. Voltaire (1694-1778).



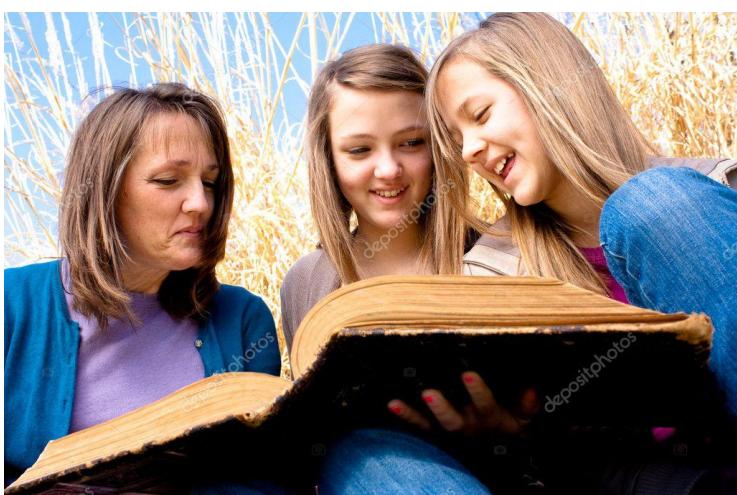
The infidel Voltaire once boastingly said: "I am weary of hearing people repeat that twelve men established the Christian religion. I will prove that one man may suffice to overthrow it." Generations have passed since his death. Millions have joined in the war upon the Bible. But it is so far from being destroyed, that where there were a hundred in Voltaire's time, there are now ten thousand, yes, a hundred thousand copies of the book of God. In the words of an early Reformer concerning the Christian church, "The Bible is an anvil that has worn

out many hammers." Saith the Lord: «No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn». ([Isaiah 54:17](#)) «The word of our God shall stand forever». «All His commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever and are done in truth and uprightness». ([Isaiah 40:8; Psalm 111:7, 8](#))

Whatever is built upon the authority of man will be overthrown; but that which is founded upon the rock of God's immutable word shall stand forever.

A mother with two daughters is exploring the pages of an ancient Bible.

Photo credit: ©Depositphotos/justinkendra



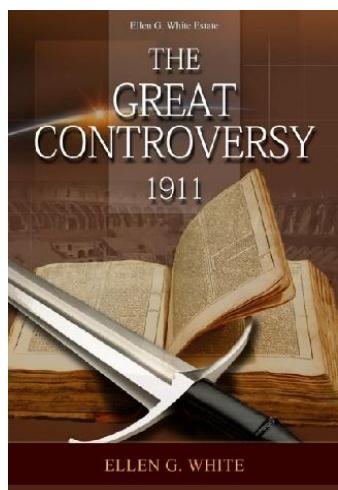
The End of chapter 15

~ 22 ~

After reading this illuminating chapter of Ellen G. White on the historical facts that occurred at the time of the French Revolution, you will have of course the desire to deepen further chapters of the book *The Great Controversy* which shows how the Protestant Reformation has spread like wildfire since the Bible Societies have arisen (cfr. notes 23 and 24). We Adventists, in some sense, also feel heirs of the Protestant Reformation of Luther, but this legacy has been enriched by us with new truths that have been discovered by other fervent believers and scholars. The foundation of a free and independent Church that it is called the Seventh-day Adventist Church, was officially established on May 28, 1863. Mrs. Ellen White was a co-founder with Joseph Bates and James White.

To obtain spiritual benefits and light, every Christian is called to do research, to deepen, to continually compare whether what he believes now is up to the scrutiny of the teachings of the Holy Scriptures. The invitation is made by Jesus himself with these words to us: «And I tell you: Ask and you will receive. Seek and you will find. Knock and the door will be opened to you». ([Luke 11:9, CEB](#))

*The Great Controversy* is a cornerstone in Adventist publishing since its first appearance in 1888. Those who read it carefully will open their mind to a new and unexpected horizon.



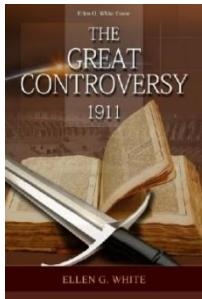
### TAKE ADVANTAGE NOW!

A copy of the precious book *The Great Controversy* of Ellen Gould White can be downloaded for free as PDF format! The fiduciary agency responsible for the care and maintenance of the editorial heritage of the note American writer is called *Ellen G. White ® Estate* who kindly provides a limited license for a single copy for personal use. The offered e-book also contains the handy bookmarks for the quick selection of the 42 chapters that are exposed.

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## The Great Controversy (1911 Edition)

Brief book Review: The Great Controversy between Christ and Satan to its ultimate and glorious conclusion. Beginning with the destruction of Jerusalem and continuing through the persecutions of Christians in the Roman Empire, the apostasy of the Dark Ages, the shining light of the Reformation, and the worldwide religious awakening of the nineteenth century, this volume traces the conflict into the future, to the Second Coming of Jesus and the glories of the earth made new. As the end draws ever closer, the vital issue of loyalty to God will become decisive. The author powerfully points out the principles involved in the impending conflict and how each person can stand firmly for God and His truth.

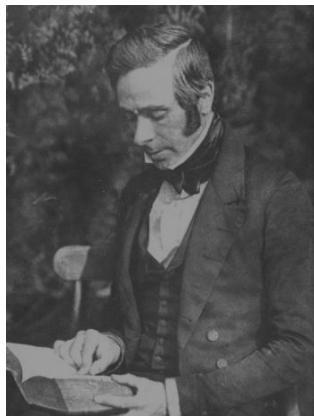
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Generally, this book of Ellen G. White contains much "material" taken from excellent historical sources of her time to provide the evidence of her statements.

Below, we have a brief profile of two main historians on which she leaned.

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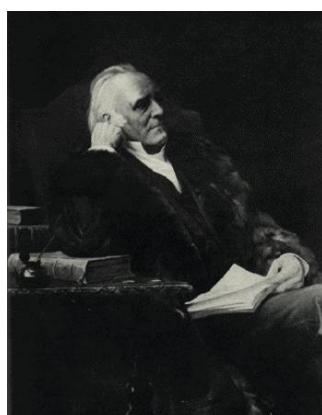
Their historical inserts are highlighted with blue color.



### Rev. Dr. James Aitken Wylie (1808-1890).

An exuberant Scottish historian graduated in jurisprudence, mentioned several times by Ellen White in this work. In 1878 he also wrote a book entitled: *History of the Protestantism*

Photo credit: Wikipedia, PD.



### Jean-Henri Merle D'Aubigné (1794-1872).

A historian and Swiss Protestant pastor born on the shore of Lake Geneva. He belonged to a renowned Huguenot family who took refuge in Geneva from Nîmes during religious persecutions against Protestants in France. D'Aubigné writes that in the four years of theological studies at the Geneva Academy "not a single hour has been consecrated to the study of the Holy Scriptures". The most cited sources, in fact, were above all Plato, Cicerone and Seneca.

Photo credit und Text : Wikipedia, PD.

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## APPENDIX WITH REFERENCES AND NOTES

### The Great Controversy, 1911.

(01) **Causes of the French Revolution.** - On the far-reaching consequences of the rejection of the Bible and of Bible religion, by the people of France, see H. von Sybel, *History of the French Revolution*, B. 5, ch. 1, pars. 3-7; Henry Thomas Buckle, *History of Civilization in England*, Chs. 8, 12, 14 (New York, 1895, vol. 1, pp. 364-366, 369-371, 437, 540, 541, 550); *Blackwood's Magazine*, Vol. 34, no. 215 (November 1833), p. 739; J. G. Lorimer, *An Historical Sketch of the Protestant Church in France*, ch. 8, pars. 6, 7.

(02) **Efforts to Suppress and Destroy the Bible.** - The Council of Toulouse, which met about the time of the crusade against the Albigenses, ruled: "We prohibit laymen possessing copies of the Old and New Testament.... We forbid them most severely to have the above books in the popular vernacular." "The Lords of the districts shall carefully seek out the heretics in dwellings, hovels, and forests, and even their underground retreats shall be entirely wiped out." - *Council Tolosanum, Pope Gregory IX Anno Chr. 1229*. Canons 14 and 2. This Council sat at the time of the crusade against the Albigenses. "This pest [the Bible] had taken such an extension that some people had appointed priests of their own, and even some evangelists who distorted and destroyed the truth of the gospel and made new gospels for their own purpose ... (They know that) the preaching and explanation of the Bible is absolutely forbidden to the lay members." - *Acts of Inquisition*, Philip van Limborch, *History of the Inquisition*, ch. 8.

The Council of Tarragona, 1234, ruled that: "No one may possess the books of the Old and New Testaments in the Romance language, and if anyone possesses them he must turn them over to the local bishop within eight days after promulgation of this decree, so that they may be burned lest, be he a cleric or a layman, he be suspected until he is cleared of all suspicion." - D. Lortsch, *Histoire de la Bible en France*, 1910, p. 14. At the Council of Constance, in 1415, Wycliffe was posthumously condemned by Arundel, the archbishop of Canterbury, as "that pestilent wretch of damnable heresy who invented a new translation of the Scriptures in his mother tongue." The opposition to the Bible by the Roman Catholic Church has continued through the centuries and was increased particularly at the time of the founding of Bible societies. On December 8, 1866, Pope Pius IX, in his encyclical *Quanta cura*, issued a syllabus of eighty errors under ten different headings. Under heading IV we find listed: "Socialism, communism, clandestine societies, Bible societies...Pests of this sort must be destroyed by all possible means."

(03) W. Scott, *Life of Napoleon*, vol. 1, ch. 17.

(04) *Blackwood's Magazine*, November 1870.

(05) W. Scott, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, cap. 17.

(06) Cfr. J.A. Wylie, *The History of Protestantism*, vol. 22, ch. 6.

(07) J.A. Wylie, *op. cit.*, vol. 22, cap. 7.

(08) H. White, *The Massacre of St. Bartholomew*, ch. 14, par. 34.

(09) W. Scott, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, cap. 17.

(10) Lacretelle, "History", 2:309, in A. Alison, *in History of Europe*, vol. 1, ch. 10.

(11) W. Scott, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, cap. 17.

(12) M.A. Thiers, *History of the French Revolution*, 2:370, 371.

- (13) A. Alison, *History of Europe from the Commencement of the French Revolution in 1789 to the Restoration of the Bourbons in 1815*, vol. 1, ch. 10.
- (14) "Journal de Paris", 1793, n. 318 cited by Buchez-Roux, *Collection of Parliamentary History*, 30:200, 201.
- (15) **The Reign of Terror.** - For a reliable, brief introduction into the history of the French Revolution see L. Gershoy, *The French Revolution* (1932); G. Lefebvre, *The Coming of the French Revolution* (Princeton, 1947); and H. von Sybel, *History of the French Revolution* (1869), 4 vols. The *Moniteur Officiel* was the government paper at the time of the Revolution and is a primary source, containing a factual account of actions taken by the assemblies, full texts of the documents, etc. It has been reprinted. See also A. Aulard, *Christianity and the French Revolution* (London, 1927), in which the account is carried through 1802 - an excellent study; W. H. Jervis, *The Gallican Church and the Revolution* (London, 1882), a careful work by an Anglican, but shows preference for Catholicism. On the relation of church and state in France during the French Revolution see Henry H. Walsh, *The Concordat of 1801: A Study of Nationalism in Relation to Church and State* (New York, 1933); Charles Ledre, *L'Église de France sous la Révolution* (Paris, 1949). Some contemporary studies on the religious significance of the Revolution are G. Chais de Sourcesol, *Le Livre des Manifestes* (Avignon, 1800), in which the author endeavored to ascertain the causes of the upheaval, and its religious significance, etc.; James Bicheno, *The Signs of the Times* (London, 1794); James Winthrop, *A Systematic Arrangement of Several Scripture Prophecies Relating to Antichrist; with Their Application to the Course of History* (Boston, 1795); and Lathrop, *The Prophecy of Daniel Relating to the Time of the End* (Springfield, Massachusetts, 1811). For the church during the Revolution see W. M. Sloan, *The French Revolution and Religious Reform* (1901); P. F. La Gorce, *Histoire Religieuse de la Revolution* (Paris, 1909). On relations with the papacy see G. Bourgin, *La France et Rome de 1788-1797* (Paris, 1808), based on secret files in the Vatican; A. Latreille, *L'Église Catholique et la Révolution* (Paris, 1950), especially interesting on Pius VI and the religious crisis, 1775-1799. For Protestants during the Revolution, see Edmond de Pressensé (ed.), *The Reign of Terror* (Cincinnati, 1869).
- (16) G. De Felice, *History of the Protestants of France*, vol. 1, ch. 2, par. 8.
- (17) J.H. Merle d'Aubigné, *History of the Reformation in Europe in the Time of Calvin*, vol. 1, ch. 36.
- (18) J.A. Wylie, *The History of Protestantism*, vol. 3, ch. 4.
- (19) J.A. Wylie, *op. cit.*, vol. 13, ch. 20.
- (20) On social conditions prevailing in France prior to the period of the Revolution, see H. von Holst, *Lowell Lectures on the French Revolution*, Lecture 1; also, Taine, *Ancien Régime*, and A. Young, *Travels in France*.
- (21) For further details concerning the retributive character of the French Revolution see Thos. H. Gill, *The Papal Drama*, B. 10; Edmond de Pressensé, *The Church and the French Revolution*, b. 3, ch. 1.
- (22) Cfr. M.A. Thiers, *History of the French Revolution*, New York, 1890, trad. da F. Shoberl, 3:42-44, 62-74, 106; F.A. Mignet, *History of the French Revolution*, Boston, 1894, cap. 9, par. 1; A. Alison, *History of Europe, 1789-1815*, New York, 1872, vol. 1, ch. 14, 293-312.
- (23) **The Circulation of the Scriptures.** - In 1804, according to Mr. William Canton of the British and Foreign Bible Society, "all the Bibles extant in the world, in manuscript or in

print, counting every version in every land, were computed at not many more than four million. ... The various languages in which those four million were written, including such bygone speech as the Moeso-Gothic of Ulflas and the Anglo-Saxon of Bede, are set down as numbering about fifty." - *What is the Bible Society?* rev. ed., 1904, 23. The American Bible Society and the British and Foreign reported a distribution from 1816 through 1970 over one and a half billion of Bibles or Scripture portions of Testaments. But the rate of diffusion has further grown. At the end of 1995 the Bible was translated into 2,096 languages.

(24) **Foreign Missions.** - The missionary activity of the early Christian church has not been duplicated until modern times. It had virtually died out by the year 1000 and was succeeded by the military campaigns of the Crusades. The Reformation era saw little foreign mission work, except on the part of the early Jesuits. The pietistic revival produced some missionaries. The work of the Moravian Church in the eighteenth century was remarkable, and there were some missionary societies formed by the British for work in colonized North America. But the great resurgence of foreign missionary activity begins around the year 1800, at "the time of the end." (Daniel 12:4). In 1792 was formed the Baptist Missionary Society, which sent Carey to India. In 1795 the London Missionary Society was organized, and another society in 1799 which in 1812 became the Church Missionary Society. Shortly afterward the Wesleyan Missionary Society was founded. In the United States the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was formed in 1812, and Adoniram Judson was sent out that year to Calcutta. He established himself in Burma the next year. In 1814 the American Baptist Missionary Union was formed. The Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions was formed in 1837. "In A.D. 1800, ... the overwhelming majority of Christians were the descendants of those who had been won before A.D. 1500.... Now, in the nineteenth century, came a further expansion of Christianity. Not so many continents or major countries were entered for the first time as in the preceding three centuries. That would have been impossible, for on all the larger land masses of the earth except Australia and among all the more numerous peoples and in all the areas of high civilization Christianity had been introduced before A.D. 1800. What now occurred was the acquisition of fresh footholds in regions and among peoples already touched, an expansion of unprecedented extent from both the newer bases and the older ones, and the entrance of Christianity into the large majority of such countries, islands, peoples, and tribes as had previously not been touched. ... "The nineteenth century spread of Christianity was due primarily to a new burst of religious life emanating from the Christian impulse.... Never in any corresponding length of time had the Christian impulse given rise to so many new movements. Never had it had quite so great an effect upon Western European peoples. It was from this abounding vigor that there issued the missionary enterprise which during the nineteenth century so augmented the numerical strength and the influence of Christianity." - Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, Volume IV, *The Great Century A.D. 1800 - A.D. 1914* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1941), pp. 2-4.